

The veterans will return to Mobile Regional Airport that evening, where some 1,000 people are expected to greet them.

Mr. Speaker, the September 19, 2012, journey of heroes from South Alabama is an appropriate time for us to pause and thank them—and all of the soldiers who fought in World War II. They collectively—and literally—saved the world. They personify the very best America has to offer, and I urge my colleagues to take a moment to pay tribute to their selfless devotion to our country and the freedoms we enjoy.

I salute each of the veterans who made the trip to Washington. May we never forget their valiant deeds and tremendous sacrifices: Hector Anderson, Eason Andrews, Robert Andry, Charles Baggett, James Ballard, Robert Barnes, Edward Beasley, Tommie Beasley, Joseph Betbeze, Jr., William C. Betbeze, Elmore Blake, Floyd Bivens, Nolan Black, Robert Bock, Richard Bolks, Samuel Branch, William Branscomb, Bernard Bringham, Wilton Brunson, Benjamin Canavella, Millard Carter, William Chapman, John Cherry, John Clark, Joseph Collie, William Colvin, O.S. Conerly, Jr., Benjamin Cooper, Bob Copley, Quincie Curtis, James Dailey, Carroll Darby, James Daves, John Davis, Perry Davis, Jeffrey Davis, Glenn Dehlin, William Douglas, Robert Drollinger, Robert Eastburn, Russell Faulkner, William Fox, Frank Frith, Aubrey Fulford, Luther Fuller, William Gilly, Edward Gold, Schauss Greben, Horace Gray, Doyle Griffiths, Michael Guarino, Nathan Gulley, Lawrence Hansen, Joe Harris, Jr., Thomas Harris, Jr., William Hatter, Benjamin Hays, Jr., Felix Hills, Jr., George Holladay, Robert Hughes, James Hummer, Alfred Hyde, Willard Johnson, Junior Keller, Roger King, Albert Kinnison, Joseph Knapp, Fred Levin, Lonza Lewis, Bernard Losse, Marjorie Markert, George Massengale, Jr., James Mathews, Jr., Elbert McCall, John McClelland, Eugene McGuire, Amy McHenry, Harold McLain, Olen McManus, Cecil McMullan, Bert Milling, Douglas Modling, Roland Montalvo, John Motes, Norman Mullen, Lloyd Mullen, Arthur Perez, Jr., Riley Pettis, Hiram Phillips, Rufus Pinkerton, Charles Reaves, I.G. Reeves, Hilburn Richards, James Robertson, Rudolph Rolison, Sr., Will Sawyer, Herman Shaddix, Dayton Shell, John Sheppard, John Shiver, Jr., William Smith, William Spaulding, James Stapleton, Preston Stengel, Ross Street, Robert Tanner, Donald Thomson, Shelby Trice, Alexander Trione, Etheridge Turner, John Vickers, Ray Wadsworth, Robert Wallace, Thomas Warner, Jr., Ennis Warren, Harold Watters, Jr., Billy West, Sr., Vernon Whiteside, Lavaine Williams, Walter Williams, and Ross Wingo.

COMMENDING PRESIDENT
NURSULTAN NAZARBAYEV AND
THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN
FOR LEADING THE WAY ON
GLOBAL NUCLEAR DISAR-
MAMENT

HON. ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2012

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL

RECORD my recent speech before the international conference From a Nuclear Test Ban to a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World held in Astana, Kazakhstan on August 29, 2012.

For historical purposes, I am also including a parliamentary appeal for nuclear abolition as well as a news article dated August 30, 2012 announcing Kazakhstan's launch of the ATOM project to support the global movement against nuclear tests.

The ATOM project, an acronym for "Abolish Testing. Our Mission" is an international petition campaign designed to unify public opinion against nuclear weapons testing. The ATOM project is the initiative of the Nazarbayev Center, and I encourage any person who opposes nuclear weapons to sign this online petition to the governments of the world calling for the permanent step to stop nuclear testing. Interested persons may sign the petition at www.TheATOMProject.org.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FROM A NUCLEAR TEST BAN TO A NUCLEAR-WEAPONS-FREE WORLD HELD IN ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN ON AUGUST 29, 2012

Distinguished Guests:

On December 2, 2009, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 64/35 which declares August 29 the International Day against Nuclear Tests in recognition of President Nursultan Nazarbayev's historic decision in 1991 on August 29 to close down the world's second largest nuclear test site and dismantle the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal at Semipalatinsk.

The resolution—which was initiated by Kazakhstan and sponsored and cosponsored by many other governments—calls for increasing awareness and education "about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means of achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world."

In 2011, we commemorated the 20th anniversary of President Nazarbayev's courageous act and, on March 7, 2012, the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands through their Nitijela at its 33rd Constitutional Regular Session passed a resolution calling for President Nazarbayev to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in tribute to victims and survivors of Cold War nuclear testing.

The President of the Marshall Islands, the Honorable Christopher J. Loeak, noted that the Committee has only recognized those who have inspected nuclear test sites or talked about the need to cooperate. At no time has the Committee bestowed the award for the actual abolishment of nuclear weaponry. So I join with the people and parliament of the Marshall Islands, and urge you to do the same, in calling upon the Nobel Peace Prize Committee to honor President Nazarbayev for promoting peace by changing the course of world history for the better.

Unlike any other government, the Republic of the Marshall Islands shares the same history and experience as Kazakhstan, having also been used as a nuclear testing ground during the Cold War. From 1946-1958, the United States began testing nuclear weapons in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and, during that period, the United States conducted 67 nuclear tests with an equivalent yield of 7,000 Hiroshima bombs.

On March 1, 1951, the United States detonated a 15 megaton hydrogen bomb code-named BRAVO in the Marshall Islands. The bomb was equivalent to 1,000 Hiroshima-sized bombs and was acknowledged as the greatest nuclear explosion ever detonated. The

BRAVO test evaporated six islands and created a mushroom cloud of 25 miles in diameter.

On August 29, 1949, the Soviet Union conducted its first nuclear explosion code-named "First Lightning" at the Semipalatinsk Test Site in eastern Kazakhstan. From 1949-1989, the Soviet Union conducted 456 nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk and the cumulative power of those explosions is estimated to be equal to the power of 2,500 Hiroshima-sized bombs.

As a result of Soviet nuclear testings more than 1.5 million Kazakhs were exposed to nuclear radiation. As a result of U.S. testings, the people of the Marshall Islands were also exposed to the horrific effects of radiation poisoning. Neither the Soviet Union nor the U.S. have fulfilled their obligation in cleaning up the mess they left behind as a result of their Cold War arms race. Instead, they turn a blind eye to the human suffering that carries forward today.

This is why I will continue to speak out and praise President Nazarbayev for his choice to renounce nuclear weaponry. My position regarding this matter is no different than the position the United States took during a joint meeting between President Obama and President Nazarbayev on April 11, 2010 when President Obama stated that "the U.S. appreciates the leadership of President Nazarbayev and the contribution of Kazakhstan to nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation."

While I applaud President Obama for stating on April 6, 2010 that "the United States will not conduct nuclear testing and will seek ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)" which bans all nuclear explosions in all environments, I believe, as the theme of this conference suggests, it is time to move from a nuclear test ban to a nuclear-weapons free world.

After all, the CTBT, like the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), is based on a flawed and outdated premise. The NPT asserts that only five nations—the nuclear weapons states—namely, the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China (which also happen to be the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council)—will pursue nuclear disarmament and share their technology for peaceful purposes if non-nuclear states agree never to acquire nuclear weapons. The NPT also states that only the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, China, and France are permitted to own nuclear weapons because only they possessed nuclear weapons at the time the treaty was open for signature in 1968.

The world has changed since 1968. No longer can non-nuclear states support the outdated premise of the NPT and none of us should settle for what the CTBT offers, particularly since the signatories of the NPT are among the worst violators of the nuclear code.

From 1949-1990, Russia conducted over 700 nuclear tests. In roughly the same time period, the U.S. conducted over 1000 nuclear tests. Since 1964, China has conducted more than 43 nuclear tests. Between 1960 and 1991, France conducted more than 200 nuclear tests and, in 1996, despite being a signatory of the NPT, France broke a world moratorium conducting 6 more tests at Moruroa Atoll in the South Pacific while the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) silently consented.

It is time for all of us to say enough is enough. It is time for the world to follow Kazakhstan's lead and begin the process of dismantling. If Kazakhstan can dismantle a nuclear arsenal which was larger than the combined nuclear arsenals of Great Britain, France and China combined, then certainly the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China can also do what is right.

Some twenty years ago, President Nazarbayev emerged to champion the cause of a nuclear weapons free world, and no other leader before or since has done what he has done to advance the rights of the human person by promoting nuclear disarmament among possessor states and preventing proliferation to new states.

As President Loebak stated, “Had Kazakhstan retained the nuclear arsenal it inherited after achieving independence and following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan could have altered the fragile peace brought about by the Cold War. But knowing the price Kazakhs and Marshallese paid to preserve international peace, President Nazarbayev chose to renounce and disarm.”

For this, the man deserves to be commended again and again. I commend President Nazarbayev for his initiative to move the world from a nuclear test ban to a nuclear-weapons free world, and for and on behalf of the people of Kazakhstan—and the Republic of the Marshall Islands—and all others now and yet to come—it is my sincere hope that we will hold together and stand firm in our support of this great cause.

PARLIAMENTARY APPEAL FOR NUCLEAR ABOLITION: FROM A NUCLEAR TEST BAN TO A NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE WORLD ADOPTED IN ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN 29 AUGUST 2012

Parliamentarians, mayors, disarmament experts, and civil society representatives meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan at the international conference “From a Nuclear Test Ban to a Nuclear Weapons Free World” held on the International Day Against Nuclear Tests 29 August 2012, make the following appeal to parliaments and governments around the world:

Legislators and governments have a responsibility to protect the security of citizens living within their jurisdictions and to protect their respective localities and the global commons for future generations.

The catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences from the nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan—and from other nuclear test sites around the world—demonstrate that the effects of any use of nuclear weapons are uncontrollable in time and space.

The possession of nuclear weapons generates a threat of their proliferation and use that pose risks to current and future generations that are unacceptable, unnecessary, unsustainable and contrary to basic ethical considerations and international humanitarian law.

The approximately \$100 billion spent annually on nuclear weapons by a few States consumes intellectual, scientific and financial resources desperately required to meet the environmental, social and human security needs of the 21st Century.

Some nations, like Kazakhstan, have decided to unilaterally abandon the possession of nuclear weapons and achieved greater security and prosperity as a result. Many nations, including all those in the Southern Hemisphere and a number in the Northern Hemisphere such as in Central Asia, have enhanced their security through establishing regional nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The United Nations General Assembly and the States Parties to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty have called on States to establish the framework for a nuclear-weapons free world through negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or package of agreements.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has circulated a Five-Point Plan for Nuclear Disarmament which includes a Model Nuclear Weapons Convention as a

guide to such negotiations. The UNSG’s plan has been supported by unanimous resolution of the Inter-Parliamentary Union representing over 150 parliaments and by various resolutions in national parliaments.

We commend President Nursultan Nazarbayev and the Republic of Kazakhstan for leadership in the global nuclear disarmament process including the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site on 29 August 1991, and the decision to voluntarily renounce the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world.

We also commend Kazakhstan for initiating the UN International Day Against Nuclear Tests, which was established by unanimous resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, with the aim to contribute to the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, a worldwide ban on nuclear tests, and a world free from nuclear weapons.

We welcome moves by the Nuclear Weapon States to complete the ratification process for the protocols to nuclear weapon-free zone treaties, as steps to significantly strengthen the architecture of regional and international security.

We welcome in particular the negotiations between the Central Asian States on one side, and China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States on the other side, on the protocols to the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, and call for its early completion.

We support the new initiative of President Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the adoption, within the UN of a Universal Declaration on the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world, as another important step towards the adoption of a nuclear weapons convention.

We are strengthened in our resolve to advance nuclear disarmament measures, by having visited the former Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site, where Soviet nuclear weapons were tested for more than forty years. 468 surface and underground nuclear tests were conducted from 1949 to 1989. One 50 megaton test alone was several thousand times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The tests have caused immeasurable medical and economic related suffering and death to millions of people.

Further progress needs to be made with concrete actions to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons, according to a multilateral, transparent, irreversible and verifiable schedule.

Therefore, we call on parliaments and governments to:

(a) maintain existing moratoria against nuclear tests, and fully support the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, including full ratification and entry-into-force, financing and support for the international monitoring network;

(b) halt any further production of nuclear weapons;

(c) operationalize the reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in their security doctrines;

(d) establish prohibitions against nuclear weapons through action in their own legislatures;

(e) establish guidelines that prohibit investment of public funds in enterprises engaged directly in manufacturing nuclear weapons or their delivery systems;

(f) establish additional regional nuclear weapon free zones, as appropriate, especially in the Middle East, North East Asia and the Arctic;

(g) commence preparatory work to build the framework for a nuclear weapons free world including through negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or package of agreements.

We all stand united in our common determination to build nuclear-weapons-free world.

We pledge to act on and share this Appeal with legislative forums, decision makers and society.

Adopted in Astana on 29 August 2012.

[From the Astana Times, Aug. 30, 2012]

KAZAKHSTAN LAUNCHES ATOM PROJECT TO SUPPORT GLOBAL MOVEMENT AGAINST NUCLEAR TESTS

(By Galia Nurzhanova and George D. Gleboff)

ASTANA.—President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced the launch of The ATOM Project in connection with the UN International Day against Nuclear Tests at a major international conference in Astana on August 29, 2012.

The conference, “From a Nuclear Test Ban to a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World”, brought together hundreds of government and parliament leaders, former heads of state, nuclear disarmament experts, leaders of international organizations and anti-nuclear activists from more than 70 nations.

Under the project, any person who opposes nuclear weapons can sign an online petition to the governments of the world calling for the permanent stop to nuclear testing and to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The ATOM Project—based at www.TheATOMProject.org—is an international petition campaign designed to unify global public opinion against nuclear weapons testing. The ATOM Project went live in late August with international television and social media campaigns.

The project is an initiative of the Nazarbayev Center, whose mandate, in part, is to continue and broaden Kazakhstan’s legacy of fighting for a world free of nuclear weapons and weapons testing, to promote nuclear responsibility, nuclear disarmament and nuclear nonproliferation according to the vision of the Kazakhstan President.

The ATOM Project, whose name is an acronym for “Abolish Testing. Our Mission”, will tell the tragic and hopeful stories of survivors of nuclear testing from the region of Semey, Kazakhstan, the site of more than 450 Soviet-era nuclear tests. The survivors and their children and grandchildren continue to suffer from illness, disease and severe deformities caused by exposure to nuclear radiation during and after the testing, which took place 100 miles outside of the city, then called Semipalatinsk.

“We have an opportunity to once more remind the world about tragic consequences of the nuclear testing, and push the global community towards more decisive actions to achieve final and definitive ban of such testing. In this regard, Kazakhstan launches today the International campaign, The ATOM Project,” President Nazarbayev said in his speech.

“Under the project, any human being on Earth, who stands against nuclear weapons, can sign an online petition urging governments of the world to abandon nuclear tests forever and ensure early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Ban Treaty. I urge the participants of the conference and all the people of the goodwill to support the ATOM Project and to make the creation of the non-nuclear world our main goal,” the President added.

Speaking at the conference, German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle thanked President Nazarbayev for launching the Project and firmly supported it.

Karipbek Kuyukov, the famous second-generation survivor of the nuclear tests who was born armless and went on to become a famous artist inspiring many with his life example, became an honorary ambassador of

the project. He gave an emotional speech at the conference which he concluded by saying: "Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past! I call on all the people to help stop the nuclear weapons testing around the world! Nuclear test sites must be closed! Let our sky be clean and our children be healthy! I do not have arms to hug all of you and to express my gratitude for participation in this conference, but I have a heart and it belongs to you! Let your families live in peace and serenity!"

According to its organizers, the ATOM Project seeks to affect real and lasting change by engaging millions of global citizens to stop nuclear weapons testing by joining together to show the world's leaders that its citizens deserve and demand a world safe from additional nuclear weapons testing.

Meanwhile, participants at the conference included politicians and experts from both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states: Valentina Matviyenko, President of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation; Miroslav Jenca, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General who read a message from the UN Secretary General; Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, U.S. Congressman (D-American Samoa); Douglas Roche, the founder of the Middle Powers Initiative and the founding chairman of the Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament; Gareth Evans, Co-chair of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation & Disarmament and former Australian Foreign Minister. Parliamentary leaders in attendance included speakers, chairmen of committees and legislators from the parliaments of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, India, Iraq, Israel, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and dozens of others, as well as members from the European Parliament.

The conference objective was to create an additional momentum for the global nuclear disarmament movement, and to mark the United Nations International Day against Nuclear Tests on August 29 which aims to raise public awareness on the effects of global nuclear weapons tests and highlight the importance of banning such tests as a step towards achieving a safer world.

The timeline of implementing the anti-nuclear initiatives pursued by Kazakhstan indicates that the country is steadily moving in the direction of disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear-weapons-free-world.

On August 29, 1991, President Nazarbayev of the then Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, defying the pressure from the Soviet authorities, shut down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in eastern Kazakhstan. In the early 1990s, Kazakhstan voluntarily renounced nuclear weapons, the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal, inherited from the former Soviet Union, and by 1995 fully rid itself of the nuclear weapons.

In 2000, the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was completely closed and its infrastructure dismantled, and in 2006 a nuclear weapons free zone in Central Asia was established under the Treaty of Semipalatinsk.

In 2009, the UN General Assembly voted unanimously to designate August 29 the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

In addition to the fact that anti-nuclear initiatives pursued by Kazakhstan have become important prerequisites for political and economic development for the country, they have created a favorable environment for the continuous improvement of its status in the international arena.

Kazakhstan has remained a steadfast activist in the area of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation given the legacy of nuclear weapons testing and the effect those tests had on the more than 1.5 million people in eastern Kazakhstan.

The ATOM Project is seen as a logical next step in the country's efforts to achieve the goal of building a nuclear weapons free world.

REAUTHORIZING CERTAIN VISA PROGRAMS

SPEECH OF

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 11, 2012

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, S. 3245 extends for three years the authorization of the E-Verify program, the EB-5 Regional Center Program, the Special Immigrant Nonminister Religious Worker Program and the Conrad State 30 J-1 Visa Waiver Program. While these are all important programs, I want to speak specifically about E-Verify.

There are currently 23 million Americans who are unemployed or are looking for work. This lack of jobs is causing almost unimaginable hardship for millions of Americans and their families. And each month more people become discouraged and give up even trying to find a job.

Making sure that Americans have every opportunity to find work is more important than ever. One important way to achieve this goal is to reduce the number of jobs that go to illegal immigrants. The E-Verify program helps do just that.

E-Verify allows employers to check the work eligibility of new hires by running the employee's Social Security number or alien identification number against Department of Homeland Security and Social Security Administration records.

In 1995, I chaired the Congressional Task Force on Immigration Reform. We published a 200-plus page report with more than 80 specific recommendations. One of those was for an electronic employment eligibility verification system, which was included in Chairman Smith's 1996 immigration reform bill. That system is now known as E-Verify.

The program is currently voluntary for most of the almost 400,000 employers who use it. It is free, Internet-based and easy to use. And the employers who use it agree.

E-Verify has proven to be such an effective tool in preventing the employment of those who are illegally in our country that it should be used by all employers to check the employment eligibility of their new hires. It is the easiest way to help make sure U.S. jobs go to Americans and legal immigrants.

Short of requiring all employers to use E-Verify, at the very least we must ensure that the program remains in place for the 400,000 employers who depend on it. S. 3245 does just that by providing for a 3-year extension. So I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

HONORING MR. JAMES FLOYD CLEVELAND

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2012

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. James Floyd Cleve-

land, who passed away on July 31 at the age of 88.

Mr. Cleveland was a truly wonderful example of a man who lived the American dream. Born on December 17, 1923, he was a cultivator of corn, cotton, soybeans, hogs and cattle on his family farm for over 60 years. He was widely known to have the best okra and mustard greens in town. Moreover, many deemed him the "Historian" for his long life and incredible ability to bring oral history to life.

Having accepted Christ at an early age, Mr. Cleveland was baptized in 1939 and dedicated much of his time to good works, notably as an active member of St. Matthew Benevolent Society and Secretary of the Lily Lodge number 5911 in Rapides Station, Louisiana.

Mr. Cleveland enjoyed 57 years of married life with Bernice Jones. Mrs. Cleveland preceded him in death on January 6, 2011, but not a day went by that he didn't speak lovingly of seeing her again. Their union produced a daughter, Sheila Joyce Bryant, who married Arthur R. Bryant. His two granddaughters, Rachel Joyce and Bathsbeba Felice were the joys of his life.

As a leader in his community, he strived to make life better for others. He rose to the occasion after the 1965 United States Voting Rights Act and was instrumental in ensuring African-Americans registered and cast their votes for the first time. He was appointed to the Rapides Parish Election process and served as Key Custodian from 1991 to 2006, always going above and beyond in his civic duty.

We all have much to learn from the life and legacy of Mr. Cleveland, who lived a quiet and honorable life as one of the farmers who feeds America. To say that Mr. Cleveland left his fingerprint on the world is an understatement. He was a friend to many and an example for all who had the good fortune to know him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the late Mr. James Floyd Cleveland.

LEONEL MANZANO OLYMPIC MEDAL

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2012

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a local hero in the 11th District of Texas, Leonel Manzano. Leo won the Silver medal in the Men's 1500 Meter race in the 2012 Olympic games, sealing his place in Olympic history and becoming an iconic figure in our district.

An Olympian is more than just an athlete—they are a representative of our nation. For the last four years, our athletes have invested blood, sweat, tears, and an extraordinary amount of time in the journey to become the best they can be. In a greater notion, this journey is what America is all about: the opportunity for all to achieve the highest echelons of success. And Leo, as a Silver Medalist, has proven an excellent representative of our District, state, and what our nation represents.

Leo rose from humble beginnings and from an early age, he demonstrated his athletic prowess. This did not go unnoticed. Soon, he